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Senator Sikkema Introducing Resolution Calling for Team to Review Detroit Schools Situation

Senate Majority Leader urges governor to take action on behalf of Detroit students

Lansing - Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema will introduce today a resolution calling for the governor to appoint a team of experts in public finance and budgeting to assess the financial situation within the Detroit Public Schools.

The resolution calls for continued community involvement in the process and that the review team presents its findings within 30 days of appointment. It also calls for a deficit-reduction plan for the district that does not incur additional debt.

“The governor asked me to delay one week before invoking any action in the Legislature and that week was up today,” said Sikkema, R-Wyoming. “I’m willing to listen to any reasonable plans for action, but in the absence of any other suggestions, I’m proceeding with our original intention.”

Sikkema also said he has been disappointed that the school district is not forthcoming with information about its financial situation, noting that the district still has not submitted a complete audit to the state.

“It’s clear the people of Detroit want to have increased involvement in how their schools are run, and we can’t ignore that mandate,” Sikkema said. “But with increased involvement comes increased responsibility and it needs to start now.”

The resolution also resolves that if a gubernatorial team is not created or is unable to develop a plan within 30 days that it is Sikkema’s intent to invoke provisions of the Local Government Fiscal Responsibility Act.

“This is a difficult situation that must be addressed as soon as possible because every day that passes, the school district is spiraling downward financially,” Sikkema said. “I’m not interested in having a financial manager appointed, but something needs to be done to address this problem. It needs to be done with the kids of Detroit in mind and it needs to be done now, not later.”

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